A New Zoning Code for a 21st Century Los Angeles

Shape your Los Angeles by shaping your future Zoning Code
What is re:code LA?

Our opportunity to **UPDATE** and **ALIGN** our Zoning Code with our **COLLECTIVE ASPIRATIONS** expressed in **ADOPTED PLANS**
THE VISION AND THE TOOLS

ADOPTED PLANS
- Engaged community vision
- Various types of plans (General, Community, Specific, etc.)
- Policies and implementation strategies
- Land Use and Zoning Maps

ZONING CODE
- Implementation tools for adopted plans
- Regulations that control development
  - Use
  - Form
  - Intensity
UPDATING THE CODE

1946, first & last time zoning regulations were comprehensively revised.
ACHIEVING MULTIPLE ASPIRATIONS

- Unique neighborhoods with a variety of needs
- Plan policies address issues that differ by neighborhood
- A variety of supplemental zoning tools have evolved over the years:
  - Q’s
  - T’s
  - K’s
  - D’s
  - Overlays
SO WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- More than 2/3 of properties in the City of Los Angeles are regulated by multiple requirements layered on top of the base zoning
- Multiple combinations of these layers make it difficult to understand the rules for development and use of property
SO WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

- Regulations are scattered throughout the Code and are difficult to navigate
- Our approach to zoning today:
  - Reactive instead of proactive
  - Ad hoc, piecemeal, and incremental
  - Zoning solutions to problems in one area often create new problems in others
  - Time-consuming and sometimes contentious
  - Hinders our ability to implement adopted plans effectively
WHY ARE WE HERE?

To create a new zoning code for a 21st century Los Angeles
WHY ARE WE HERE?
What have we done since we began in 2013?
AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY PROCESS

ZONING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Stakeholders representing different groups & regions of Los Angeles (community activists, architects, professors, consultants, etc.)

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Interdepartmental representatives
AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY PROCESS

- 6 Listening Sessions in July 2013
  - Valley
  - Metro
  - Harbor
  - Westside
  - South LA
  - Virtual

- About 400 participated

- Each provided unique perspectives, and identified positive & negative aspects of current Zoning Code

- Feedback used to develop Zoning Code Evaluation Report
AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY PROCESS

- Outlined core values & strategies
- Guides the development of our new Zoning Code

Report available at recode.la
Ready to unveil first components of the new Zoning Code

WHY ARE WE HERE?
- To Create a New Zoning Code for a 21st Century Los Angeles

EASIER TO USE
- Better Organized, More Visual
- Greater Consistency & Predictability

A STRONG CORE
- A New Vision for Downtown
- A Variety of Experiences & Places
- A New Code for Downtown

NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER
- One Size DOES NOT Fit All
- More Tools to Preserve & Promote Neighborhood Character

HOW DO WE GET THERE?
- Together! Get Involved

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EASIER TO USE
Better Organized, More Visual
CURRENT ZONING SYSTEM

- Existing zoning made up of two or more districts:

  - Current zoning regulates uses & form

```
Prefix | D Limits | Overlay
```

```
[Q]C2-1D-CDO
```

```
Zone Class | Height District
```

CURRENT ZONING SYSTEM

[Q]C2-1D-CDO

QUALIFIED CONDITIONS

ZONE CLASS (LAMC)
Commercial Zone: Permitted Uses
Setbacks
Lot Standards

HEIGHT DISTRICT (LAMC)
Floor Area Ratio
Height

DEVELOPMENT LIMITATIONS
Restrict:
Heights
Floor Area Ratio
% of lot coverage
Building setbacks

SUPPLEMENTAL USE DISTRICT

Other LAMC Provisions
Section 12.21 – General Provision
Parking, Open Space, Walls/Fences
Section 12.22 – General Exceptions
Section 12.24 – Conditional Use
Section 12.37 – Dedication and Improvement
Article 4.4 – Signs

28 Pages of Design Standards:
Building, Pedestrian, Open Space, Circulation,
Parking, Landscaping, Signs
### MEETING THE CHALLENGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CURRENT CHALLENGES</th>
<th>GOALS FOR NEW CODE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Based on dated assumptions</td>
<td>▪ Equipped with tools to implement community vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Uses “patches” to compensate for lack of better tools</td>
<td>▪ Adaptable to current and future policy needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Not accessible to the general public</td>
<td>▪ Comprehensive and the singular source for zoning regulations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Visual, easy to understand and navigate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PROPOSED ZONING SYSTEM

CONTEXT

FORM

FRONTAGE

CHARACTER

BUILDING

RELATIONSHIP

TO THE STREET

ACTIVITY

BUILT

ENVIRONMENT

USE

[CONTEXT-FORM-FRONTAGE] [USE]
PROPOSED ZONING SYSTEM

CONTEXT

- Acknowledges that the City is made up of different types of neighborhoods

- Identifies the over-arching character of the community
  - Downtown, Urban, Suburban, Rural, etc
PROPOSED ZONING SYSTEM

FORM DISTRICT

- Identifies allowable development envelopes for buildings
- Four sets of metric-types
  - Lot Criteria
  - Building Placement
  - Bulk & Mass
  - Activation
Requirements for how site & building address the street:

- Transparency
- Story Height
- Pedestrian Access
- Building Elements
PROPOSED ZONING SYSTEM

USE DISTRICT

- Category system instead of enumerated list
- “Permitted”, “Limited”, “Conditional Use Permit”, or “Not Permitted”
- Clear use definitions & standards
EASIER TO USE

Greater consistency and predictability
PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

- Rules are all in one section
- Same work flow for similar processes
  - Existing processes accounted for
  - 114 down to 33
- Contains clear, concise text with flowcharts

Table of our current processes & procedures
EASIER TO USE

Customized Code Experience on ANY Web-Enabled Device
A STRONG CORE
A New Vision for Downtown
Central City and Central City North Community Plan Updates

- **Policy Development**
  - Community Input (past and ongoing)
  - Analysis of Decades of Policy Thought
  - Place-based Approach

- **Zone Development**
  - Existing Zoning Analysis: 129 Zones
  - Existing Physical Conditions Analysis
A STRONG CORE

A New Code for Downtown
DOWNTOWN CODE

- Tailored to implement community plan policies
  - 26 Form Districts + 20 Use Districts
  - 41 Form + Use District Combinations Envisioned Today

- Adaptable to future needs
  - 520 Possible Form + Use District Combinations

EXAMPLE DOWNTOWN ZONES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[D-HR1] [MXR]</th>
<th>[D-HC1-S] [MXE]</th>
<th>[D-PS1] [IL]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

![Example Downtown Zones Diagram](Image)
NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

One Size DOES NOT Fit All
SINGLE-FAMILY ZONES

- Over half of Los Angeles is zoned single-family
- Vast majority is zoned R1 (as shown on the right)
- We need a wider variety of options to better address community vision

Legend:
- **R1 ZONES**
- **RS ZONES**
- **RE ZONES**
- **RA ZONES**
SINGLE-FAMILY ZONES

- One size DOES NOT fit all

R1 ZONES
RS ZONES
RE ZONES
RA ZONES
NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

More Tools to Promote and Preserve Neighborhood Character
A BETTER FIT

CURRENT TOOLS
Building Envelope
Setback + Height
Mass/Bulk
Current Maximum Residential Floor Area

PROPOSED TOOLS
Building Envelope
Setback + Height + Bulk Plane
Mass/Bulk
Reduced Maximum Residential Floor Area
DESIGN FLEXIBILITY

- Building Envelope acts as exterior limits to address potential impact on adjacent property
- Does not mandate design, allows for variety of shapes and styles
VARIETY OF OPTIONS

R1-A

R1-B

R1-C

R1-D

R1-E

R1-F
HOW DO WE GET THERE?
Together! Get Involved
NEXT STEPS

OUTREACH

- Virtual Forum – April 26, 2016 | 7 pm (sign up at recode.la for details)
- Monthly ZAC Meetings

DELIVERABLES

- Downtown Zoning Code Draft
- Processes & Procedures
- Single-Family Zoning Options
thank you

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